

Remarks

Claims 35-46 are pending and rejected. Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 35-46.

Claims 41-42 and 44-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent 5,600,648 (Furuta). Claims 41 and 44 require that a first adaptor assembly: 1) receive a first SDH signal having regenerator section overhead (RSOH) information, multiplexer section overhead (MSOH) information, and a payload; 2) terminate the RSOH information and the MSOH information; and 3) transfer the terminated RSOH information, the terminated MSOH information, and the payload. Claims 41-44 also require that a second adaptor assembly: 1) receive the terminated RSOH information, the terminated MSOH information, and the payload; 2) generate a second SDH signal having the terminated RSOH information, the terminated MSOH information, and the payload; and 3) transfer the second SDH signal.

As is well known in the art, RSOH and MSOH termination entails: 1) retrieving RSOH/MSOH data from the RSOH/MSOH data fields in an SDH signal; 2) processing the RSOH/MSOH data to facilitate network operation; 3) generating *new* RSOH/MSOH data; and 4) loading the *new* RSOH/MSOH data into the RSOH/MSOH fields of the SDH signal. In claims 41 and 44, the original RSOH/MSOH information is terminated by the first assembly – meaning that the first assembly removes the original RSOH/MSOH information from the overhead fields and replaces this removed overhead information with *new* RSOH/MSOH information in the overhead fields. However, the first assembly also transfers the *terminated* RSOH and MSOH information to a second assembly. The second assembly generates an SDH signal having the same original RSOH and MSOH information that was terminated by the first assembly. Thus, the invention allows the second assembly to regenerate the original version of the SDH signal that was received by the first assembly (including the original RSOH and MSOH information), *even though the first assembly terminated the original RSOH and MSOH information.*

The Examiner asserts that Furuta teaches the same system with respect to figure 19 and its corresponding text. The Furuta system does not *terminate* the RSOH and MSOH information, and the Furuta system does not generate SDH signals having *terminated* RSOH/MSOH information. (See Furuta, column 4, line 54 to column 5, line 34.)

In the Furuta system, interface 30a removes the RSOH/MSOH information from the SDH signal, and interface 30b adds the RSOH/MSOH information back to the SDH signal. In between interfaces 30a and 30b, the Furuta system locates and inspects the Path Overhead (POH).

Furuta is directed to the location and inspection of the POH and barely mentions RSOH/MSOH processing. To inspect the POH, the Furuta system removes the RSOH/MSOH information from the SDH signal as a step in locating and inspecting the POH. After POH inspection, the Furuta system adds the RSOH/MSOH information back to the SDH signal. Furuta does not disclose *terminating* the RSOH and MSOH during POH inspection. Rather, it appears that Furuta removes the RSOH and MSOH for POH inspection, and then adds the unterminated RSOH and MSOH information back to the SDH signal after POH inspection. Under this interpretation, Furuta does not disclose the transfer of *terminated* RSOH/MSOH information, and the use of the transferred and *terminated* RSOH/MSOH information to generate an SDH signal.

For the sake of argument, assume that Furuta suggests terminating the RSOH/MSOH information. In this case, the Furuta system would generate new RSOH/MSOH information for the SDH signal. There is nothing in Furuta that suggests the transfer of the *terminated* RSOH and MSOH information for the downstream regeneration of an SDH signal having the original but terminated RSOH/MSOH information.

Applicants note that the recent Office Action asserts that interface 30c generates an SDH signal with terminated RSOH and MSOH. Applicants could not find any teachings in Furuta that support the assertion. It does not appear that interface 30c ever receives the RSOH or the MSOH.

Claims 35-40, 43, and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,600,648 (Furuta) in view of U.S. Patent 5,416,768 (Jahromi). Claims 35-40, 43, and 46 are patentable for at least the reasons given above. Jahromi does not teach the above cited claim requirements.

Applicants submit that there are numerous additional reasons in support of patentability, but that such reasons are moot in light of the above remarks and are omitted in the interests of brevity. Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 35-46.


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